



DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

News Release

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

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PADDLEBOARD CORRIDOR IN WATERS OFF ALA MOANA BEACH PARK WILL REMAIN IN PLACE INDEFINITELY

HONOLULU -- The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) has decided to leave in place until further notice a series of buoys demarking the Stand-Up Paddleboard Corridor in the waters of Ala Moana Beach Park.

The seven buoys were installed in May 2010 to help promote safety of ocean users via voluntary compliance to separate swimmers from stand-up paddlers. DLNR's Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation, lead agency on this issue with jurisdiction for this stretch of nearshore waters, will pursue any permits required to leave the buoy system in place long-term.

"A full year has passed and the corridor seems to have served its purpose, separating stand-up paddlers from other ocean users and greatly reducing the risk of injury due to overcrowding," said William J. Aila, Jr., DLNR Chairperson.

"The key to the solution has always been in users regulating themselves, users giving each other the freedom to enjoy the waterway. We were able to gain voluntary compliance without needing adopt rules that could have excluded users from sharing a treasured resource," Aila said.

The department thanks the many ocean users and web sites, billboards and blogs that sprang up following installation of the SUP corridor and which helped share the proposed guidelines for use of the corridor.

"Even though the system seems to be working well, we ask that frequent users of the SUP corridor help mentor new users so they will cross the swimming areas safely and use the corridor as intended," said Aila. "We also ask that paddlers continue to give swimmers the right of way. At the same time we ask that swimmers be aware of their surroundings and other users and be responsible for their own safety."

As a reminder, all users of this waterway should avoid clinging to the buoys, as they are not designed as flotation or mooring devices. Brushing up against marine growth anchored to the submerged portions of

the buoys may cause injury. DOBOR will inspect the buoys and anchor systems periodically and clean off the marine growth as needed.

The buoys were designed and constructed by Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation in-house dive team at nominal costs (approximately \$1,400 for all seven buoys) and their alignment has only needed to be adjusted once since installation. The buoy system has withstood heavy weather, harsh winds and even a tsunami event without being forced off station.

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For more information news media may contact:

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Other images are available by cutting and pasting these links into a browser:

http://hawaii.gov/dlnr/dbor/SUP PICS/DSC_0018.JPG
http://hawaii.gov/dlnr/dbor/SUP PICS/DSC_0121.JPG
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FACT SHEET

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CHRONOLOGY OF THE ALA MOANA BEACH PARK BUOY SYSTEM :

The calm waters of the lagoon at Ala Moana Beach Park offer ideal conditions for novice stand-up paddlers (SUP). However, a significant increase of stand-up paddleboarding in these waters in 2009 prompted DLNR to seek a way to reduce the hazards of overcrowding and a mix of uses, most notably, paddling and swimming.

DLNR conducted a community meeting to discuss user conflicts in the waters of Ala Moana Beach Park on May 2, 2009. At the time, DLNR proposed installation of a SUP corridor, demarked by a system of buoys as an alternative to instituting rules banning specific uses from this waterway.

The department tested numerous configurations and different materials for the buoy system before settling on a design and fabricating the necessary hardware.

The buoy system was installed on May 19, 2010 and the department publicized its proposed guidelines for use of the SUP corridor.

Installation of the buoy system marked the beginning of a six-month test period during which the department monitored comments received from users, statements made in the media and on the Internet.

November 2010 marked the end of a six-month test period. DLNR extended the test period another six months for a total one year to observe the effects of climactic conditions and user interaction with the corridor for a full year.

June 1, 2011 marks the end of the 12-month observation period.

ALA MOANA STAND-UP PADDLEBOARD CORRIDOR BUOY INSTALLATION FACTSHEET

ACRONYMS AND TERMS

STATE OF HAWAII = SOH.

DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES = DLNR, a department within the SOH.

DIVISION OF BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION = DOBOR, a division of DLNR.

SMALL BOAT HARBOR = SBH, DOBOR harbor properties.

STAND-UP PADDLEBOARD = SUP

SPAR BUOY= in nautical terms, a buoy resembling a vertical log; a tall, thin buoy that floats upright in the water and is characterized by a small water plane area and a large mass, a float attached by rope to the seabed to mark channels in a harbor or underwater hazards, the type of buoy that was installed in the Ala Moana Beach Park lagoon.

PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF PROJECT

Seven temporary spar buoys were installed in the Ala Moana Beach Park lagoon May 19, 2010. They were situated approximately 80-feet *mauka* (toward the shoreline) of the interior of the reef in a line which runs parallel to the shoreline.

The buoys are approx 12-inches in diameter and four feet high and are very similar in construction to swim buoys being used by DOBOR to demark swim zones in waters fronting Kailua Beach (Oahu) and other restricted ocean zones. They are foam-filled and are attached to a weight situated on the sandy bottom by means of a 3/8-inch chain and shackle assembly.

The (anchor) weight is constructed of a rubber truck tire filled with concrete and a wire frame with an eye protruding from the concrete. Each weight is approximately 600 lbs.

The buoys have a swing of approximately 4-feet from center at low tide. As the tide rises, the swing of the buoys is expected to be far less.

To construct the buoy weights: Wire and rebar odds and ends from repair and maintenance jobs was used to create frames within truck tires discarded at DOBOR harbors. Leftover concrete from a project at Haleiwa SBH was mixed with aggregate and poured into the truck tires. Lengths of 3/8-inch chain and shackles were purchased by DOBOR. Swim buoys kept in reserve as replacements for existing buoys in various Oahu District waterways were modified for this project. Approximate cost per buoy assembly: \$200. Total project cost: \$1400 (\$200 x seven buoys).

PROCEDURE

DOBOR conducted research and fabricated test materials to settle on an ideal configuration for the buoy assemblies. Fabrication occurred over the course of several months as opportunities arose to utilize spare materials. This resulted in significant cost savings for DOBOR.

Underwater reconnaissance was conducted in the months prior to installation to identify the ideal resting sites for the buoy systems; patches of sand devoid of rock or coral structures that harbored marine life.

Buoy weights were pre-loaded into the water on 5/18/10.

Installation on 5/19/10 began at approx. 7:30 a.m. with attachment of two buoys to the weights via chains and shackle assemblies.

The buoy closest to Magic Island was installed first. Air bags were incorporated to lift and situate the buoy weight.

The buoy closest to Kewalo Basin was installed second to provide a rough line of sight.

Weights were situated for all the other buoys and marked on the surface by floaters. The remaining buoys were then installed, replacing the floaters.

Installation was completed at 2:00 P.M. 5/19/10.

THE DIVE TEAM

The DOBOR Oahu District Dive Team has been in existence since 2002 and only began operation after many requirements set by the SOH Department of Health, and the Hawaii Occupational Safety and Health Division of the SOH Department of Labor and Industrial Relations were met.

All members are certified divers.

Each operation must be manned by three dive team members; one at the helm of the operation vessel, one in the water at the surface as an emergency contingency and one conducting the subsurface work. The Oahu District Dive team is overseen by the Dive Administrator (Meghan Statts, DOBOR Oahu District Manager) at all times.

Dive Team members on this operation included Paul Sensano, Haleiwa SBH Harbor Agent (vessel operator), Edward Underwood, DOBOR Administrator (diver), and William Aila, then Waianae SBH Harbor Agent (diver) and now the Director of DLNR.

The Oahu District Dive Team has been instrumental in conducting subsurface surveys of harbors and dock structures and in removing and raising numerous derelict and sunken vessels and automobiles from Hawaii's nearshore waters.

PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR USE OF ALA MOANA OCEAN WATERS STAND-UP PADDLING CORRIDOR

- The Stand-Up Paddling corridor is demarked by a series of buoys and the interior (mauka) edge of the reef. This area is designated for use by stand up paddlers.
- The swimming/wading zone is the area between the series of buoys and the shoreline. This area is designated for use by swimmers and waders.
- Swimmers and waders should always have the right of way in all areas.
- Novice paddlers should wear a leash attached to their boards while in the waterway.
- Minors and individuals unsure of their swimming abilities operating paddleboards in the paddling corridor should wear a US Coast Guard approved personal floatation device (PFD) as a precaution.
- Paddlers may ingress and egress the waters of the waterway at any point but should take the safest, most direct route to the paddling corridor.
- Swimmers may access the reef by traversing the paddling corridor at any point but should take the safest, most direct route to the reef.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources asks that all users of this waterway respect the rights of others to enjoy this resource.

The department also hopes that swimmers, waders and paddlers will act responsibly, render aid to those who need assistance and mentor others who are not acquainted with the uses of the swim/wading zone or the paddling corridor.